

Against Women Act of 2005. This effort will require a bi-partisan commitment.

Again, I am thankful to Senators REID and FRIST for their work on seeing that bill is passed and to all of my colleagues who unanimously supported the Violence Against Women Act of 2005.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, last evening, S. 1197, the Violence Against Women Act, was passed out of the Senate. I commend the Judiciary Committee for including Title 9, Safety for Indian Women, in its bill to reauthorize the act. Title 9 focuses on the needs of Indian tribes to enable them to reduce and treat incidents of domestic violence in Indian country. Among other things, it would authorize the creation of tribal criminal history databases to document domestic violence convictions and protection orders and it creates a new Federal criminal offense authorizing Federal prosecutors to charge repeat domestic violence offenders before they seriously injure or kill someone. S. 1197 also would authorize the Bureau of Indian Affairs police and certain tribal officers to make arrests for domestic violence assaults committed outside of their presence.

Since 1999, the Department of Justice has issued various studies showing that Indian women experience the highest rates of domestic violence compared to all other groups in the United States. These reports state that one out of every three Indian women are victims of sexual assault; that from 1979 to 1992, homicide was the third leading cause of death of Indian females between the ages of 15 to 34; and that 75 percent of those deaths were committed by a family member or acquaintance. What we don't know, however, is the impact of these violent acts on law enforcement, judicial, mental or medical services in Indian country. I am, therefore, pleased to see that this bill would authorize a comprehensive study of domestic violence in Indian Country to gauge the impact of these acts to Indian tribes and their resources. The findings of such a study will help the Congress and the administration to better focus resources to areas with the greatest need.

Earlier this Congress, Senator DORGAN and I introduced the Restoring Safety to Indian Women Act. We worked closely with the Senate Judiciary Committee to ensure that the provisions of this bill, some of which I mention here, were given due consideration. Throughout the more comprehensive S. 1197, Indian tribes would be eligible for various grants to enhance their victim services, judicial function, and law enforcement service capacity to the same extent as State and local governments are eligible.

Domestic violence is a national problem and not one that is unique to Indian country. Yet, due to the unique status of Indian tribes, there are obstacles faced by Indian tribal police, Federal investigators, tribal and Federal prosecutors and courts that impede

their ability to respond to domestic violence in Indian country. Title 9 of this bill goes a long way toward removing these obstacles at all levels and to enhance the ability of each agency to respond to acts of domestic violence when they occur. These critical changes to the current law will greatly curb violence against Indian women, and perhaps even save lives.

Again, I thank the members of the Senate Judiciary Committee for their thoughtful consideration in drafting a bill that includes an often forgotten segment of our population, the Nation's Indian tribes.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### CONGRATULATING ASHLEY JEFFERS

• Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate Ashley Jeffers of Alvaton, KY. Ashley was recently awarded a \$15,000 college scholarship as part of the Girls Incorporated National Scholars Program.

Ashley experience at Girls Inc. of Bowling Green, KY is a testament to her impressive work ethic, initiative, and leadership skills. She joined Girls Inc. at the age of 14, and was hired shortly after to help teach classes. Eager to expand the center, Ashley learned about other Girls Inc. national programs and incorporated new classes into the existing program at Bowling Green. Inspired by her experience working with other young women at Girls Inc., Ashley has decided to pursue a career in social work following her studies at Western Kentucky University.

The Girls Inc. National Scholars Program was created in 1992 by a \$6.1 million gift from Lucille Miller Wright, a volunteer pilot during World War II, who wanted to help young women overcome financial barriers to attending college. Since 1992, the National Scholars Program has awarded over \$1.8 million to 304 girls.

By inspiring other young women to become strong, smart, and bold, Ashley Jeffers does justice to the legacy of Lucille Miller Wright. She is an example of how young Americans can have a positive influence on their communities by participating in mentorship activities such as Girls Inc.

I congratulate Ashley on this achievement. She is an inspiration to the citizens of Kentucky. I look forward to seeing all that she will accomplish in the future.●

##### TRIBUTE TO AUGUST WILSON

• Mr. COLEMAN. Mr. President, I want to pause in the Senate's business today to recognize the passing of a great American who we in Minnesota are proud to call our own: Pulitzer Prize winning poet and playwright August Wilson. He died yesterday at the age of 60.

August Wilson spent a good part of his adult life in Saint Paul, MN, which is my home. He worked for a time at the Science Museum of Minnesota, writing educational scripts. As his work became recognized and his fame spread, he continued to be seen around Saint Paul, working in coffee shops and other such places, sketching out ideas on the backs of napkins.

In his many plays, Mr. Wilson brought his audiences back time and again to the neighborhood where he grew up, in the Hill District of Pittsburgh, PA. Through a series of 10 plays, he traced the African-American experience through the ten decades of the 20th century. The first, "Jitney," about a city taxi station, was written in Saint Paul.

Decades ago, the poet T.S. Elliot wrote that, "Poetry is not an assertion of the truth, but making that truth more fully real to us." America struggles with deep divisions on matters of race. The tragic events in the gulf coast have brought that home to us. How desperately we need the kind of expression of the truth that August Wilson brought to a large audience.

Facts are important, but we have all experienced the frustration of not seeing our set of facts "carry the day." Psychologists have even determined that we use one part of our brain to process the ideas of political candidates we support and a different part of our brain when we are listening to the views of one we don't. Jerry Garcia of the Grateful Dead wrote a line I like: "People ain't gonna learn what they don't wanna know."

But we hold out the hope the art can find a way through our defenses and make truth fully real to us. When Abraham Lincoln met Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," legend has it that he said, "So this is the little woman who started this big war."

It is a special honor that August Wilson will have a theater on New York's Broadway named in his honor. The Minnesota connection in that is the theater has previously born the name of Virginia Binger, the late wife of Jim Binger, one of Minnesota's great citizens. The eight Wilson plays that made it to Broadway were nominated for more than 50 Tony awards.

Talking about the blues in a way that could just as well have been applied to his own writing, he said: "You don't sing to feel better. You sing 'cause that's a way of understanding life."

We recognize the history and forces which shaped the life of August Wilson and we honor his life long effort to make the truth real.●

##### A FRIEND TO IDAHO ARTS

• Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I would like to recognize an Idahoan, who through his lifelong love and support of the arts, has gained national recognition. Dan Harpole, executive director